

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 10 and 16 are currently being cancelled.

Claims 9, 14, 29 and 30 are currently being amended. Please note that these amendments are being made to obtain a quick allowance of this application, whereby Applicants intend to file a continuation or divisional application for these claims in their original form or in some altered form at a future date.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment cancels and amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 9, 11-15, 17-24 and 29-31 are now pending in this application.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 10, 12, 16, 19-24 and 31.

Claim Rejections:

In the Office Action, the claims 9, 11, 13 and 29 were rejected under U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Penners (presumably U.S. Patent No. 5,793,762) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,668,876 to Falk, and claims 14, 15, 17, 18 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Penners and Falk in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,907,804 to Schroderus.

By way of this amendment and reply, claims 9 (and its corresponding article of manufacture claim 29) and 14 (and its corresponding article of manufacture claim 30) have been amended to incorporate the limitations originally recited in claims 10 and 16 respectively, so that claims 9 (29) and 14 (30) as amended herein respectively correspond to claims 10 and 16 written in independent form, which were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. All of the other remaining claims 11-13, 15-24 and 31 are dependent on amended claims 9 and 14, so that only allowable claims are remaining in the present application.

Consequently, the claim rejections made in the Office Action based on the cited art of record have been overcome.

Conclusion:

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Information Disclosure Statement:

The Examiner is requested to evidence the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed on February 24, 2004, by returning an initialed copy of the Form PTO SB/08 submitted to the PTO with that IDS.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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